

# Experimental

## INDEX of the HEART:

O R,

## SELF-KNOWLEDGE.

*In which*

(As in a Looking-glasse) the civillest of men may see what need they have of a Redeemer; and that it most deeply concerns them with all speed, to sue out their pardon in Christ, and to rely wholly and only upon Free-grace, for pardon and Salvation; except they prefer an everlasting furnace of fire and brimstone in Hell, before an eternal weight of superabundant glory in Heaven, as all (most sottisly) do, that by sinne and Satan are bewitched.

Drawn up and published for the good of all,

By R. Younge of Roxwell in Essex, Florilegus.

Add this as a *Third Part* to the *Trial of true Wisdom*, and those *Three Fundamental Principles of Christian Religion*, Intituled;  
*A short and sure Way to Grace and Salvation.*

SECT. XXVII.



Loose Libertine, meeting with his Friend that had lately been a Formal Christian; he greets him as followeth:

SIR, methinks I have observed in you a strange alteration, since our last meeting at Middleburrough: not only in your behaviour, company, and converse; but even in your countenance: What is the matter, if I may be so bold?

Convert. Truly Sir, you are not at all mistaken, nor am I unwilling to acquaint you with the cause; if you can afford to hear it.

Soon after my return into England, I was carried by a Friend to hear a Sermon: where the Minister so represented the very thoughts, secrets, and

deceitfulness

deceitfulnesse of my heart unto my conscience; that I could not but say of him, as the woman of Samaria once spake of our Saviour: *He hath told me all things that ever I did.* Which made me conclude with that Unbeliever, *1 Cor. 14. 24, 25.* That God was in him of a truth: nor could he ever have so done, if he were not of God. As the young man in the Gospel reasoned with the Pharisees, touching Jesus when he had opened his eyes, that had been blind from his birth, *Joh. 9. 32, 33.* Whereupon I could have no peace nor rest, untill I had further communed with him about my estate; for I found my self in a lost condition touching Eternity: It faring with me as it did with those Jews, *Act. 2.* when Peter by his searching Sermon, had convinced them, that Christ, whom they had by wicked hands crucified and slain, was the only Son of God, and Lord of glory, *ver. 36, 37.* And having had the happinesse to enjoy the benefit of his sage advice as I stood in need thereof; (God having given him the tongue of the learned, to administer a word in season to them that are weary, *Isa. 50. 4.*) I blesse God, his Word and Spirit hath wrought in me such a change and strange alteration, that it hath opened mine eyes that were blind before, inclined my will to obedience, which before was rebellious, softened my heart, sanctified and quite changed my affections: so that I now love that good which before I hated, and hate that evil which before I loved; and am delighted with those holy exercises, which heretofore did most displease me; and am displeased with those vain pleasures and filthy sins which in times past did most delight me. Which is such a mercy, that no tongue is able to expresse! For till that hour I went on in the broad way, and worlds road to destruction, without any mistrust; whereas now God hath been pleased to take me into his Kingdom of grace here, and will never leave me, untill he hath brought me to his Kingdom of glory hereafter.

*Loose Libertine.* What you speak makes me wonder: for I ever held you the completest man of my acquaintance; just in all your dealings, temperate and civil in your deportment; yea, I have never seen you exceed in the least, or heard you swear an Oath, except faith and truth, and that very rarely. Besides, you have been a good Protestant, and gone to Church all your daies.

*Convert.* What you speak, none that know me, can contradict; nor could they ever accuse me of any scandalous crime, or unjust act. Yea, I had the same thoughts of my self; and should any one have told me formerly, that I was such a great sinner, such a Devil Incarnate as I was! I should have replied as Hazeel did to the Prophet, (telling him of the abominable wickednesse he would e're long commit) *What am I a dog, &c. 2 Kings 8. 12, 13.* And no wonder, for as every man in his natural condition, is stark blind to spiritual objects, *1 Cor. 2. 14.* so the heart of man is deceitfull above all things: even so deceitfull, that none but God alone can know it, as the Prophet shews, *Jer. 17. 10.* But because this is a truth that transcends your belief, and because it may be of singular use to you also, to know the same: I will give you a short character of my former condition; the which done, I doubt not but you will assent unto what I have hitherto said, or shall further relate.

## Sect. XXV III.

First, Touching my knowledge, (I mean *saving knowledge*, without which the soul cannot be good, as wise Solomon witnesseth, *Prov. 19. 2.*) it was such, (though I thought my self wiser than to make scruple of, or perplex my self about matters of Religion, as do the Religions: even as the King of Tyre thought himself wiser than Daniel, *Ezek. 28. 3.*) that spiritual things were mostly represented to my understanding false, and clean contrary to what they are indeed. Like corporal things in a Looking-glass, wherein those that are on the right hand seem to be on the left, and those that are on the left hand seem to be on the right. As it fared with *Safat Paul*, while he was in his natural condition, *Act. 26. 9.* which made me think and call evil, good; and good, evil; bitter, sweet, and sweet bitter; to justify the wicked, & condemn the just, as the Prophet complains, *Isa. 5. 20, 23.*

As for instance, I most sottishly thought, that I both loved, and served God as I ought; yea, I should have taken it in foul scorn, if any one had questioned the same: when indeed I was a Traitor to God, and took up arms against all that worshipped him in Spirit and in truth. I was so far from loving and serving him, that I hated those that did it; and that for their so doing; I could also hear him blasphemed, reproached, and dishonoured, without being once stirred, or moved at it. I loved him dearly; but I could never afford to speak a word for him; and likewise his Children intirely, but instead of justifying them, or speaking in their defence, when I heard them scoff, scorned and abused by wicked and ungodly men; all my delight was to jeer at, slight and slander them where ever I came. I more feared the Magistrate, than I feared God; and more regarded the blasts of mens breath, than the fire of Gods wrath. I chose rather to disobey God, than to displease great ones; and feared more the worlds scorns, than his anger.

And the like of Christ that died for me; a strong argument that I loved Christ, when I hated all that resembled him in holiness. Yea, I so hated holiness, that I most bitterly hated men for being holy: insomuch that my blood would rise at the sight of a good man, as some stomachs will rise at the sight of sweet-meats. I was a Christian in name, but I could scoff at a Christian indeed; I could honour the dead Saints in a formal profession; while I worried the living Saints in a cruel persecution. I condemned all for Roundheads, that had more Religion than a Heathen, or knowledge of heavenly things, than a child in the womb hath of the things of this life; or conscience than an Atheist; or care of his soul, than a Beast. I had always the basest thoughts of the best men: making ill constructions of whatsoever they did or spake: as the Scribes and Pharisees dealt by our Saviour.

## Sect. XXIX.

As, O what a poor slave did I hold the man of a tender conscience to be! yea, how did I applaud my self for being zeallesse, and fearlesse; together with my great discretion, and moderation: when I saw this man vexed for his zeal, that other hated for his knowledge, a third persecuted for the profession of his Faith, &c. For (being like Cain, Ishmael, Eliab, Michol, Pharaoh, and Festus) I thought their Religion, Puritanisme, their consciences, of sinne, hypocrisie; their profession, dissimulation; their prudence, policy; their

their faith and confidence, presumption; their zeal of Gods glory, to be pride and malice; their obedience to Gods Laws, rebellion to Princes; their execution of justice, cruelty, &c. If they were any thing devout or forward to admonish others, that so they might pluck them out of the fire; I conceived them to be besides themselves: as our Saviour was thought to be by his Kinsfolk, and Saint Paul by Festus, Mark 3. 21. John 10. 20. Acts 26. 24. 1 Cor. 1. 18. My religion was to oppose the power of Religion; and my knowledge of the truth, to know how to argue against the truth. I never affected Christs Ambassadors, that preached the glad tidings of salvation, but had a spleen against them; yea, I hated a Minister, for being a Minister; especially, if a godly and zealous one, that spake home to my conscience, and told me of my sins; much more if he would not admit me to the Lords Table without trial and examination: yea, then like Ahab to Micah, I became his enemy, and hated him ever after; would impeach his credit, and detain from him his dues. And are not all these strong evidences, that I loved and served God, and my Redeemer as I ought? But to make it more manifest, what a rare Christian I was:

I thought my self a Believer; yea, I could boast of a strong faith, when yet I fell short of the very Devils in believing: for they believe the threats and judgments contained in the Word, and tremble thereat, James 2. 19. Whereas I thought them but scare-crows to fright the simple withall: yea, I held Hell it self but a fancy, not worth the fearing.

Because I was not notoriously wicked, but had a form of godlinesse, was civil, &c. I was able to delude my own soul, and put off all reproofs and threatenings; by comparing my self with those, that I presumed were worse than my self: as, Drunkards, Adulterers, Blasphemers, Oppressors, shedders of blood, and the like; counting none wicked but such. Yea, looking upon these, I admired my own holiness; and thought my moral honesty, would be sufficient to save me. Nor did I know wherein I had offended.

And whereas the Law is spiritual, and binds the heart from affecting, no lesse than the hand from acting: I was so blind and ignorant, that I thought the Commandment was not broken, if the outward gross sin be forborn. Whence these were my thoughts, I never brake the first Commandment, of having many gods: for I was no Papist, nor Idolater: nor the second, for I worshipped God aright: nor the third, for I had been no common swearer, only a few petty oaths: nor the fourth, for I had every Sabbath gone duly to Church: not the fifth, for I ever honoured my Parents, and have been a loyal subject: not the sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, or tenth, for I never committed murder, or adultery, never stole ought, never bare false witness; nor could I call to mind, that I had at any time coveted my neighbours wife, servant, estate, &c. And nothing more comith with me, than to brag of a good heart and meaning, of the strength of my faith and hope, of my just and upright dealing, &c. And because I abstained from notorious sins, I thought my self an excellent Christian; if God was not beholding to me for not wounding his name with oaths, for not drinking and playing out his Sabbaths, for not railing on his Ministers, for not oppressing and persecuting his poor Members; &c.

SECT. XXX.

And yet had it been so, as I imagined; admit I had never offended in the least all my life; either in thought, word, or deed: yet this were but one half of what I owe to God; this were but to observe the negative part of his laws; still the affirmative part thereof I had been so far from performing, that I had not so much as thought of it. And to be just in the sight of God, and graciously accepted of him, these two things are required: the satisfactory part to escape Hell; and the meritorious part to get Heaven. And the true method of grace is, Cease to do evil, Learn to do well, Isa. 1.16, 17. The Fig-tree was cursed, not for bearing evil fruit; but because it bare no good. The evil servant was not bound hand and foot, and cast into prison, for wasting his Masters goods; but for not gaining with them. And those Reprobates at the last day, shall be bid depart into everlasting fire; not for wronging or robbing of any, but for not giving, for not comforting Christs poor Members, Mat. 25. So that my case was most desperate. For though, with that Pharisee, Luk. 18.11. I was apt to thank God, and brag; that I was just, and paid every man his due: yet I never thought of being holy, and of paying God his dues; as his due of believing, or repenting, of new obedience, his due of praying, bearing, conferring, meditating on his word and works, sanctifying his Sabbaths, and instructing my Children and Servants; teaching them to fear the Lord. His due of Love, Fear, Thankfulness, Zeal for his Glory, charity and mercy to Christs poor Members, and the like.

I should have served God in spirit, and according to Christs Gospel: as all that are wise hearted do live, and believe, and hear, and invoke, and hope, and fear, and love, and worship God in such manner, as his word prescribes. I should have been effectually called, and become a new Creature by regeneration; being begotten and born anew, by the immortal seed of the Word. I should have found an apparant change wrought in my judgment, affections, and actions, to what they were formerly. The Old man should have changed with the New man, worldly wisdom with Heavenly wisdom, carnal love for spiritual love, servile fear for Christian and filial fear, idle thoughts for holy thoughts, vain words for holy and wholesome words, fleshly works for works of righteousness: even hating what I formerly loved, and loving what I formerly hated.

But alas! I have heard the Gospel day after day, and year after year: which is the strong arm of the Lord, and the mighty power of God to salvation; That is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword; and yet stood it out and resisted, instead of submitting to Christs call; even refusing the free offer of grace and salvation. I have heard the word faithfully and powerfully preached, for forty years: yet remain'd in my natural condition unregenerate: without which new birth, there is no being saved, as our Saviour affirms, Job. 3. 5. I had not troden one step in the way to conversion: for the first part of conversion, is to love them that love God, 1 Joh. 3. 10, 11, 14. I should daily have grown in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: but I was so far from growing in grace, that I had not one spark of grace or holiness; without which no

man shall see the Lord, Heb. 12 14. I was all for observing the second Table, without respect to the first: or all for outward conformity, not at all for spiritual and inward holiness of the heart.

## Self. XXXI.

Either what I did was not morally good for the matter, or not well done for the manner; nor to any right ends: as out of duty and thankfulness to God, and my Redeemer; and out of love to my fellow members. Without which the most glorious performances, and rarest virtues, are but shining sins, or beautiful abominations. Gods Glory was not my principal end, nor to be saved my greatest care.

I was a good, civil, moral, honest hypocrite, or Infidel: but none of these graces, grew in the Garden of my heart. I did not shine out as a light, by a holy conversation to glorify God, and win others. Now only to refrain evil, except a man hates it also, and does the contrary good; is to be evil still: because honesty without piety, is but a body without a soul.

All my Religion was either superstition, or formality, or hypocrisy. I had a form of godliness, but denied the power thereof: I often drew near unto God with my mouth, and honoured him with my lips: but my heart was far from him, Isa. 29. 13. Mark. 7. 2. to 14. Matth. 15. 7. to 10. All which considered, viz. the means which God had afforded me, and the little use I had made thereof, left me in a far worse condition, than the very heathen, that never heard of Christ. So that it was Gods unspeakable mercy, that I am not at this present frying in Hell flames, never to be freed.

God hath sent unto us all his Servants the Prophets, rising up early, and they have been instant in Preaching the Gospel, both in season, and out of season: but my carnal heart hath ever been *slimy* unto God, *waxy* to Satan: you shall dye, if you continue in the practice of sin, I heard: but you shall not dye, as saith the Devil, I believed.

## Self. XXXII.

Besides all this, suppose I had none of these to answer for; neither sins of Commission, nor sins of Omission: yet Original sin were enough to damn me, no need of any more; and yet my actual transgressions have been such, and so many, and my ingratitude therein so great; that it might have sunk me down with shame, and left me hopelesse of ever obtaining pardon for them. As see but some small part of my monstrous, and devilish ingratitude to so good a God, so loving and mercifull a Saviour and Redeemer; that hath done, and suffered so much for me, even more than can either be expressed or conceived, by any heart were it as deep as the Sea!

Touching what God and Christ hath done for me, in the first place he gave me my self, and all the creatures to serve for my use; yea he created me after his own Image, in righteousness, and holiness, and in perfect knowledge of the truth, with a power to stand, and for ever to continue in a most blessed, and happy condition. But this was nothing in comparison; for when I was in a sad condition, when I had forfeited all this and my self; when by sin I had turned that Image of God into the Image of Satan, and wilfully plunged my soul and body into eternal torments: when I was

become

become his *enemy*, mortally *hating* him, and to my utmost *fighting* against him, and taking part with his only enemies *sin* and *Satan*; not having the least thought or desire of reconciliation, but a perverse and obstinate will, to resist all means tending thereunto: he did redeem me, not only without asking, but even against my will; so making of me his *curled enemy*, a *Servant*, of a *Servant* a *Son*, of a *Son* an *Heir*, and *Co-heir* with *Christ*, Gal. 4. 7. But how have I *requited* this so great, so *superlative* a *mercy*? All my recompence of *Gods* love unto me, hath been to do that which he *hates*, and to *hate* those whom he *loves*.

*Christ* the fountain of all good is my *Lord*, by a manifold right, and I his *servant* by all manner of obligations. First, He is my *Lord* by the right of *Creation*, as being his workmanship made by him. Secondly, By the right of *Redemption*, being his purchase bought by him. Thirdly, Of *preservation*, being kept, upheld, and maintained by him. Fourthly, His by *Vocation*, even of his family; having admitted me a *member* of his *visible Church*. Fifthly, His also (had it not been my own fault) by *sanctification*, whereby to possess me. Lastly, He would have me of his *Court* by *glorification*, that he might *crown* me; so that I was every way his. *God* had raised me from a *beggar* to a *great estate*: but how did I require him? I would not if possible, suffer a godly and *conscientious Minister* to be *chosen*, or to abide where I had to do; but to bring in one that would *flatter* sin, and *flout* holiness; *discourage* the godly, and *incourage* the wicked, I used both *my own*, and all *my friends* utmost ability. Much more might be mentioned, but I fear to be tedious.

Now argue with *all the world*, and they will conclude, that there is no *vice* like *ingratitude*. But I have been more *ingratefull* to *God*, than can be exprest by the *best Oratour* alive. It was horrible ingratitude in the *Jews* to scourge and crucifie *Christ*, who did them good every way; for he *healed* their *diseases*, *fed* their *bodies*, *inlightened* their *minds*, of *God* became *man*, and lived miserably amongst them many years, that he might *save* their *souls*: but they fell short of my ingratitude to *God*, in that most of them were not in the least *convinc'd*, that he was the *Messias* sent from *God*, and promised from the beginning. But I have not only denied this *Lord* that bought me, but I hated him; yea, most spitefully and maliciously sought on *Satans*, and *sins* side against him; and persecuted his children, and the truth with all my might: and all this against *knowledge*, and *conscience*, after some measure of *illumination*, which cannot be affirmed of the *Jews*. Yet miserable wretch that I was, if I could have given him my body and soul, they should have been saved by it, but he were never the better for them.

Self. XXXIII.

Lastly, To tell you that which is more strange! Notwithstanding all this that hath been mentioned, and much more: Yet I thought my self a good *Christian* forsooth; yea, with that *young man* in the *Gospel*, I thought I had kept all the *Commandements*. Nor was I a whit troubled for sin, either *original*, or *actual*: but my *conscience* was at *quiet*, and I was at *peace*, neither did any sin trouble me. Yea, I would applaud my self with that *Pharisee*,



*Luke 18.9, to 15.* and say, *I was not like other men*: not once doubting of my salvation. I ever refused to do what my Maker commanded, and yet confidently hoped to escape what he threatened. Nor did I doubt of having *Christ my Redeemer and Advocate in the next life*, when I had been a bitter enemy to him and his members in this life. Here was blindness with a witness; as it is not to be believed how blind and *blockish* men are, that have only the flesh for their guide; especially if they have *hardned their hearts*, and *seared their consciences* with a customary sinning. As I could give you for instance, a large catalogue of rare examples, how sin hath besetted men: and what *stark fools carnal men* are in *spiritual things*; be they never so wise for mundane knowledge. But least it should be taken for a digression or excursion, you shall have a list of them by themselves, the which I will add as an *Appendix to this Discourse, or Dialogue*. In the meantime I have given you a brief of my manifold provocations, and great ingratitude to my Maker and Redeemer (for otherwise I might be endless in the prosecution thereof.) It remains that I should in like manner lay open my *original defilement*; which is the *fountain* whence all the former (whether sins of *commission*, or sins of *omission*) do flow. But touching it be pleased to peruse that small Tract, intituled, *A short and sure way to Grace and Salvation*: Or, *Three Fundamental Principles of Christian Religion*, by R. T. from page 4. to page 10.

SECT. XXXIV.

*Loose Libertine*. If this hath been your case, no wonder it hath startled you; for to deal plainly with you, as you have done with me; what I have heard from you, makes me also tremble. For if such *honest moral men*, that live so *unreprovably*, as you had done, go not to heaven; what will become of me? that have been *openly prophane*, and *notoriously wicked* all my time? Yea, it contented me not to do wickedly my self, and so damne my own soul: but I have been the occasion of drawing hundreds to Hell with me, by seducing some, and giving ill example to others, (the *infection of sin*, being much worse than the act.) As how many have I drawn to be *Drun-kards*, and *swearers*, and *whoremongers*, and *prophane persons*? insomuch, that the blood of so many souls as I have drawn away, will be required at my hands. Yea, my life hath been so debauched and licentious, that I have brought a scandal upon the Gospel, and made it odious to the very *Turks and Infidels*, Rom. 2.24.

*Convert*. Alas! what I did that was morally good, or what evil I refrained, was more for self-ends, or more for fear of mens Laws, than for love of *Christs Gospel*. True, I went under the notion of an *honest man*, and a good *Christian*: I was baptized into the faith, and made a member of *Christs visible Church*: but I was so far from endeavouring to perform, what I then promised, that in effect I even renounced both *Christ*, and my *Baptism*, in persecuting him, and all that sincerely professed his Name; thinking I did *God good service* therein, *Joh. 16.2. Gal. 1.13, 14. Phil. 3.6.* Nor was it for want of ignorance, that you thought so of me: for by nature (be we never so milde and gentle) we are all the seed of the Serpent, Gen. 3.15. and children of the Devil, *Joh. 8.44.* Yea, the very best moral man is but



*A tame Devil, as Athanasius well notes. But it is a true proverb, the blind eat many a flea; and all colours are alike to him that is in the dark.*

*Loose Libertine.* So much the worse is my condition: for my conscience tells me, there is not a word you have spoken of your self, but I can justly apply the same unto my own soul, and a great deal more. For whereas you have been a *moral honest man*; so that none except your self, could tax you for breaking either *Gods Law, or mans*: I have been so wicked and prophane, that I could most presumptuously, and of set purpose, take a pride in my wickednesse, commit it with greedinesse, speak for it, defend it, joy in it, boast of it, tempt and inforce to it; yea, mock them that disliked it. As if I would send challenges into Heaven, and make love to destruction; and yet did applaud my self, and prefer my own condition before other mens: saying, I was no dissembler; yea, I hated the hypocrisie of Professors: I do not justify my self, and despise others, like the Puritans: I am not factious, schismatical, singular, censorious, &c. I am not rebellious, nor contentious like the Brownists, and Anabaptists. I am a good fellow, and love an honest man with my heart, &c. and as touching a good conscience, I was never troubled in mind, as many scrupulous fools are. I have a good heart, and mean as well as the precisest. But now I see the Devil and my own deceitfull heart deluded me so, that my whole life hitherto, hath been but a dream, and that like a blind man, I was running headlong to Hell, when yet I thought my self in the way to Heaven. Just as if a beggar should dream, that he were a King, or as if a traitor should dream of his being crowned, when indeed he was to be beheaded; the case of Laodicea, Rev. 3. 17. the young man in the Gospel, Luk. 18. 20, 21. and that Pharisee, spoken of Luk. 18. 11, 12.

#### Self. XXXV.

*Convert.* It was not your ease alone, but so it fares with the worst of sinners: Only it much rejoyces me, that it hath pleased God to open your eyes, to see all this in your self. For flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto you. Yea we are naturally so blind, and deaf, and dead in sin and in soul: that we can no more discern our spiritual filthinesse, nor feel sin to be a burden, than a blind *Æthiopian* can see his own blacknesse, or than a dead-man can feel the weight of a burthen, when it is laid upon him, *Act. 28. 47. Isa. 6. 9, 10.*

And this common experience shews; for if you observe it. who more jocond, confident and secure, than the worst of sinners; they can strut it under an unsupportable Mass of oaths, blasphemies, thefts, murders, adulteries, drunkenness and other the like sins; yea can easily swallow these spiders with *Mithridates*, and digest them too: when one that is regenerate, shrinks under the burden of wandring thoughts, and want of proficiency. But why is it? they are dead in sin, *Ephes. 2. 1. Revel. 3. 1.* Now lay a mountain upon a dead-man, he feels not once the weight.

To a Christian that hath the life of grace, the least sin lyes heavy upon the conscience: but to him that is dead, let his sins be as heavy as a mountain of lead; he feels in them no weight at all.

Again, They are insensible of their sin and danger, because ignorant

for what the eye seeth not, the heart seeth not. Security makes worldlings merry, and therefore are they secure, because they are ignorant. A dunce we know, seldom makes doubts: yea a fool, saies Solomon, boasteth and is confident, Prov. 14. 15. neither do blind men ever blush. And the truth is, were it not for pride and ignorance, a world of men would be ashamed to have their faces seen abroad. For take away from mens minds vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations, and the like; you will leave the minds of most men and women, but poor shrunken things; full of melancholy, indisposition, and unpleasing to themselves. Ignorance is a veil or curtain to hide away their sins: whereupon they are never troubled in conscience, nor macerated with cares about eternity; but think that all will be well.

The Devil and the flesh, prophesie prosperity to sin, yea life and salvation, as the Pope promised the powder-traitors: but death and damnation (which Gods Spirit threatens) will prove the crop they will reap. For God is true, the Devil and all flesh are lyers.

When we become regenerate, and forsake sin, then the Devil strongly and strangely assaults us: as he did Christ, when he was newly baptized; and Pharaoh the children of Israel, when they would forsake Egypt; and Herod the children, when Christ was come to deliver his people. Whence, commonly it comes to passe, that those think best of themselves, that are least cause; yea the true Christian, is as fearfull to entertain a good opinion of himself, as the false is unwilling, to be driven from it. They that have store of grace, mourn for the want of it: and they that indeed want it, chant their abundance. None so apt to doubt their adoption, as they that may be assured of it: nor none more usually fear, then they that have the greatest cause to hope. We feel corruption not by corruption, but by grace: and therefore the more we feel our inward corruptions; the more grace we have.

Contraries, the nearer they are to one another, the sharper is the conflict betwixt them: now of all enemies, the spirit and the flesh are nearest one to another, being both in the soul of a regenerate man; and in all faculties of the soul, and in every action that springeth from those faculties. The more grace, the more spiritual life; and the more spiritual life, the more antipathy to the contrary: whence none are so sensible of corruption, as those that have the most living souls.

SECT. XXXVI.

Now for remedy of the contrary, there cannot be a better lesson for carnal men to learn than this. All the Promises of God are conditional, to take place if we repent: as all the threatenings of God are conditional, to take place if we repent not. But wicked men, as they believe without repenting; their faith being meer presumption: so they repent without believing, their repentance being indeed desperation: and this observe, we are cast down in the disappointing of our hopes; in the same measure, as we were too much lifted up, in expectation of good from them. Whence these peremptory presumers if ever they repent, it is commonly as Branch Spira, an Advocate of Padua did: and never did any man plead so well for himself, as he did against himself.

One star is much bigger than the Earth; yet seems many degrees lesse. It is the nature of fear, to make dangers greater, helps lesse then they are. Christ hath promised peace and rest unto their souls that labour, and are heavy laden; and to those that walk according to rule, Matth. 11. 29. Gal. 6. 16. even peace celestial in the state of grace, and peace eternal in the state of glory. Such therefore, as never were distressed in conscience, or live loosely; never had true peace. Peace is the Daughter of Righteousness. Rom. 5. 1. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God. But he who makes a bridge of his own shadow, will be sure to fall into the water.

Those Blocks, that never in their life were moved with Gods threatnings, never in any straight of conscience, never groaned under the burden of Gods anger: they have not so much as entered into the porch of this house, or lift a foot over the threshold, of this School of repentance. Oh! that we could but so much fear the eternal paines, as we do the temporary; and be but so carefull to save our souls from torment, as our bodies. In the mean time, the case of these men is so much the worse; by how much there fear is the lesse. It fares with the soul, as with the body. Those diseases, which do take away all sense of pain; are of all others most desperate. As the dead Palsey, the falling-sickness, the sleepy lethargy, &c. And the Patient is most dangerously sick, when he hath no feeling thereof. In like manner, whilst they suppose themselves to be free from judgment; they are already smitten with the heaviest of Gods judgments; a heart that cannot repent, Rom. 2. 5.

In a lethargy, it is needfull the Patient should be cast into a burning Fever; because the senses are benumbed, and this will waken them, and dry up the besotting humours. So in our dead security, before our conversion; God is fain to let the Law, Sin, Conscience and Satan loose upon us; and to kindle the very fire of Hell in our souls: that so we might be roused out of our security: but thousands of these blocks, both live and depart with as great hopes, as men go to a lottery: even dreaming of Heaven, until they awake in Hell. For they too often die, without any remorse of conscience like blocks; or as an Ox dyes in a ditch. Yea thousands that live like Laban, dye like Nabal, (which is but the same word inverted,) whilst others the dear Children of God, dye in distresse of conscience. For it is not every good mans hap, to dye like Antoninus Pius; whose death was after the fashion, and semblance of a kindly and pleasant sleep. However Saint Austin's rule, will be sure to hold; He cannot dye ill, that hath lived well: and for the most part, He that lives conscionably, dyes comfortably, and departeth rich. And so you see, how it fares with the wickedest and worst of men. Wherefore if you are truly sensible of your wretchednesse, it is a good sign, that you are in some forwardnesse to be recovered; and really to become so good, as formerly you but dream'd, or imagined your self to be. And indeed the very first step to grace, is to feel the want of grace; and the next way to receive mercy, is to see your self miserable. Therefore our constant, and most diligent search should be, to find out the naughtinesse of our own hearts; and to get strength from God, against our prevailing corruptions.

## SECT. XXXVII.

*Loose Libertine.* But is there any hope for one so wicked as I? who have turned the grace of God into wantonnesse; applying Christs passion as a warrant for my licentiousnesse, nor as a remedy; and taking his death as a licence to sin, his cross as a Letters patent to do mischief. As if a man should beat his drum of rebellion, with his pardon. For I have most spitefully, and maliciously, taken up arms against my Maker, and fought against my Redeemer all my daies.

Convert. Do but unfeignedly repent you of your sins, and forsake your former evil waies, and lay hold upon Christ by a true, and lively faith: my soul for yours, God is very ready to forgive them, be they never so many, and innumerable for multitude; never so heinous, for quality and magnitude. Yea, I can shew you your pardon from the great King of Heaven for all that is past: the which you may read at large Isa. 55. 7. Ezek. 18. 21. to 29. and 33. 11. Joel 2. 12, 13, 14. Yea read 1 Cor. 6. 10, 11. together with the story of Manasses, Mary Magdalen, the Thief, and the Prodigal Son: and you shall see presidents thereof. Yea the very murderers of the Son of God, upon their serious and unfeigned repentance, and stedfast believing in him; received pardon and salvation. And indeed despair, is a sin which never knew Jesus. True, every sin deserves damnation: but no sin shall condemn, but the lying and continuing in it. True Repentance, is ever blest with forgiveness. And know this, that Gods mercy is greater than thy sin, whatevēr it be: you cannot be so infinite in sinning, as he is infinite in pardoning, if you repent: yea sins upon repentance are so remitted; as if they had never been committed. I will put away thy transgressions as a cloud, and thy sins as a mist, Isa. 44. 22. And what by corruption hath been done, by repentance is undone. As the former examples witness. Come and let us reason together, saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, Isa. 1. 18. Yea whiter than snow. For the Prophet David laying open his blood-guiltinesse, and his original impurity, useth these words: Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow, Psal. 51. 7. And in reason, did Christ come to call sinners to repentance? and shall he not shew mercy to the penitent? Or who would not cast his burden upon him, that desires to give ease? As I live saith the Lord, I would not the death of a sinner, Ezek. 18. 32. and 33. 11.

Only, apply not this salve before the ulcer be searched to the bottom: Lay not hold upon mercy, untill you be thoroughly humbled. The only way to become good; is first to believe that you are evil: and by accusing our selves, we prevent Satan: By judging our selves, we prevent God.

Are we as sick of sorrow, as we are of sin; then may we hopefully go to the Physician of our souls, who came into the world only to cure the sick, and to give light to them only, who sit in darknesse, and in the shadow of death. God does not pour the oyl of grace, but into a broken, and contrite heart.

Wouldst thou get out of the miserable estate of nature, into the blessed estate of grace? and of Satans bondslave become the child of God, and a member of Christ? Wouldst thou truly know thine own heart? and be

very sensible how evil and wicked it is? that so thou maist have a more humble conceit of thy self? lay to heart these three particulars: 1. The corruption of our nature, by reason of Original Sin. 2. Our manifold breach of Gods righteous Law, by actual sin. 3. The guilt and punishment due to us for them both. This being done, thou wilt see and find; thy necessity of a Redeemer. And it is thirst only that makes us relish our drink; hunger our meat. The full stomach of a Pharisee, surcharged with the superfluities of his own merits, will loath the honey-comb of Christs righteousness. This was it, which made the young Prodigal, to relish even servants fare; though before wanton, when full fed at home. No more relish feels the Pharisaical heart, in Christs blood, than in a chip. But O how acceptable, is the fountain of living waters, to the chased hart panting and braying. The blood of Christ, to the weary and tyred soul; to the thirsty conscience scorched with the sense of Gods wrath: he that presents him with it, how welcome is he? even as a special choice man, one of a thousand. And the deeper the sense of misery is, the sweeter the sense of mercy is.

SECT. XXXV I I I.

Then if you would be satisfied for time to come, whether your Repentance, and conversion be true and sound; these particulars will infallibly inform you. If you shall persevere, (when this trouble for sin is over) in doing that which now you purpose, it is an infallible sign, your repentance is sound, otherwise not. If thou dost call to mind, the Vow which thou madst in Baptism, and dost thy endeavour to perform that, which then thou didst promise: If thou dost square thy life, according to the rule of Gods Word; and not after the rudiments of the world: If thou art willing to forsake all sin, without reserving one: (for otherwise that one sin may prove the bane of all thy graces: even as Gideon had seventy Sins, and but one Bastard: and yet that Bastard, destroyed all the rest that were Legitimate, Judg 9.5.) Sin is like the Ivy in the wall, cut off bough, branch, body, stump, yet some strings or other will sprout out again: Till the root be pluck't up, or the wall be pulled down and ruined, it will never utterly die.

Regeneration, or new birth, is a creation of new qualities in the soul, as being by nature only evil disposed. Gods children are known by this mark, they walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit, Rom.8.1. If Christ have called you to his service, your life will appear more spiritual, and excellent than others.

As for your fails, 'tis a sign that sin hath not gained your consent, but committed a rape upon your soul; when you cry out to God. If the ravished Virgin under the Law cried out, she was pronounced guiltlesse. A sheep may fall into the mire, but a swine delights to wallow in the mire. Great difference between a woman that is forced, though she cries out and strives, and an alluring Adulteresse.

Again, The thoughts of the godly are godly, of the wicked, worldly; and by these, good and evil men are best and truest differenced one from another. Would we know our own hearts, and whether they be changed by a new birth? Examine we our thoughts, words, actions, passions; especially;

cially, our thoughts will inform us; for these cannot be subject to hypocrisie, as words and deeds are.

Self. XXXIX.

Then by way of caution know; that a child may as soon create it self, as a man in the state of Nature regenerate himself. We cannot act in the least unless God bestows upon us daily privative grace, to defend us from evil and daily positive grace, enabling us to do good. And those that are of Christ teaching, know both from the word, and by experience, that of themselves they are not only weak, but even dead to what is good; moving no more than they are moved: that their best works are faulty, all their sins deadly, all their natures corrupted originally. Thou hast been quickened, that wert dead in trespasses and sins, Ephes. 2. 1. Yea, we are altogether so dead in sin that we cannot stir the least joynt, no not so much as feel our own deadness nor desire life, except God be pleased to raise and restore our souls from the death of sin, and grave of long custom, to the life of grace. Apt we are to all evil, but reprobate and indisposed to all grace and goodness; yea to all the meanes thereof.

*My powers are all corrupt, corrupt my will:*

*Marble to good, but wax to what is ill.*

Inasmuch, that we are not sufficient of our selves to think, much lesse to speak, least of all to do that which is good, 2 Cor. 3. 5. Joh. 15. 4, 5. I have power to choose or refuse the object; to do these well we have no power. We have ability, we have will enough to undo our selves, scope enough hell-ward; but neither motion, nor will to do good: that must be put into us by him that gives both power and will, and power to will.

Finally, Each sanctified heart feels this, but no words are able sufficiently to expresse, what impotent wretches we are, when we are not sustained. So that we have no merit, but the mercy of God to save us: nothing but the blood of Christ, and his mediation to cleanse and redeem us: nothing but his obedience to enrich us. As for our good works, we are altogether depending on God for them, not God to us; nor we to our selves: because they are only his works in us.

Whatsoever thou art, thou owest to him that made thee: whatever thou hast, thou owest to him that Redeemed thee. Therefore if we do any thing amiss, let us accuse our selves: if any thing well, let us give all the praise to God. And indeed this is the test of a true or false Religion: that which teacheth us to exalt God most, and most to deprime our selves is the true; that which doth most prance up our selves, and detract from God, is the false. As Bonaventure well notes.

Self. XL.

Now to wind up with a word of exhortation; if thou beest convinced and resolvest upon a new course; let thy resolution be peremptory, and constant: and take heed you harden not again; as Pharaoh, the Philistines, the young man in the Gospel, Pilate and Judas did: resemble not the iron which is no longer soft, than it is in the fire; for that good (saith Gregory) will do us no good, which is, not made good by perseverance. If with these premonitions, the Spirit hath vouchsafed to stir up in thine heart any

good motions, and holy purposes to obey *God*, in letting thy sins go; *quench* not, grieve not the *Spirit*, 1 Thes. 5. 19. Return not with the *Dog* to thy vomit; lest thy latter end prove seven-fold worse than thy beginning, *Matth.* 12. 43, 45. O it is a fearful thing to receive the grace of *God* in vain! and a desperate thing, being warned of a rock, willfully to cast our selves upon it. Neither let *Satan* persuade you to desert your repentance; no, not an hour; lest your resolution proves as a false conception, which never comes to bearing. Besides, death may be sudden: even the least of a thousand things can kill you, and give you no leisure to be sick.

Thirdly, If thou wilt be safe from evil works, avoid the occasions; have no fellowship with the workers of iniquity: neither fear their scoffs; for this be sure of, if your person and waies please *God*, the world will be displeased with both: If *God* be your friend, men will be your enemies: if they exercise their malice, it is where he shews mercy. But take heed of losing *Gods* favour to keep theirs.

*Beda* tells of a great man, that was admonished by his friends in his sickness to repent: who answered, He would not yet; for that if he should recover, his friends and companions would laugh at him: but growing sicker and sicker, they again pressed him: but then his answer was, that it was now too late; for I am judged and condemned already.

A man cannot be a *Nathaniel*, in whose heart there is no guile; but the world counts him a fool. But *Christ* saies, Verily except ye be converted, and become as little children; ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, *Mat.* 18. 3.

Again, *Satan* and your deceitfull heart will suggest unto you, that a Religious life, is a dumpish and melancholy life: but holy *David* will tell you, that light is sown to the righteous, and joy to the upright, *Psal.* 97. 11. *Isa.* 65. 14. And experience tells, that earthly and bodily joys are but the body, or rather the dregs of that joy, which *Gods* people feel and are ravished with. As O the calm, and quietness of a good conscience! the assurance of the pardon of sin, and joy of the Holy Ghost, the honesty of a virtuous and holy life how sweet they are. Yea even *Plato* an *Heathen* could say, That if wisdom and virtue could but represent it self to the eyes, it would set the heart on fire with the love of it. And the like of a sinners sadness, as hear what *Seneca* saies; if there were no *God* to punish him, no *Devil* to torment him, no *Hell* to burn him, no man to see him: yet would he not sin, for the ugliness and filthiness of sin, and the guilt and sadness of his conscience. But experience is the best informer: wherefore take the counsell of holy *David*, *Psal.* 34. 8. O taste and see, that the *Lord* is good: blessed is the man, that trusteth in him. To which accordeth that of holy *Bernard*, Good art thou, O *Lord*, to the soul that seeks thee; what art thou then to the soul that finds thee? As I may appeal to any mans conscience, that hath been softened with the unction of grace; and truly tasted of the powers of the world to come; to him that hath the love of *God* shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost: whether his whole life be not a perpetual *hallelujah*, in comparison of his natural condition. Whence they are able to sleight all such objections, as he did: you tell me that



that scrupling of small matters, is but stumbling at straws; that they be but trifles: When I know your tongue can tell nothing but truth, I will believe you.

Fifthly, Beg of God that he will give you a *new heart*, and when the heart is changed, all the *members* will follow after it, as the rest of the *creatures* after the Sun, when it *arise*th. But without a work upon the heart, wrought by the Spirit of God; it will follow its own inclination to that which it affecteth; whatsoever the judgment shall say to the contrary: That must be first *reformed*, which was first *deformed*. It is idle, and to no purpose to purge the *channell*, when the *fountain* is corrupt. Whence the *Apostle* orderly bids us, first be *renewed in the spirit* of our minds; and then let him that *steal*, steal no more, Eph. 4. 23, 24. Yea it is Gods own counsell, to the men of *Jerusalem*, Jer. 4. *Wash thine heart from wickedness: that thou maist be saved*, ver. 14. It is most ridiculous to apply remedies to the outward parts, when the *distemper* lies in the stomach. To what purpose is it to *crop off* the top of *weeds*, or *lop off* the *boughs* of the *tree*, when the *root* and *stalk* remain in the earth: as cut off the *sprig* of a *tree*, it grows still; a *bough*, an *arm*, still it grows, *lop off* the *top*, yea saw it in the midst, yet it will grow again; stock it up by the *roots*, then (and not till then) it will grow no more. Whence it is that God saith, *Give me thine heart*, Prov. 23. 26. *Great Cities* once expunged, the *dorpes* and *Villages* will soon come in of themselves: the *heart* is the *treasury* and *store-house* of wickedness, Mat. 12. 34. such as the heart is, such are the actions of the body which proceed from it, Mat. 12. 35. Therefore as *Christ* saith, *Make clean within, and all will be clean*; otherwise not, Mat. 23. 26. Therefore *Dauids* prayer is, *Create in me a new heart O Lord, and renew a right Spirit within me*, Psal. 51. 10. do thou the like, importune him for grace; that you may firmly *resolve*, *speedily begin*, and continually *persevere*, in doing and suffering his holy will: desire him to *inform* and *reform* you so, that you may neither *misbelieve* nor *mislive*; to change and purifie your *naure*, subdue your *reason*, *relieve* your *judgment*, *reform* and strengthen your *will*, *renew* your *affections*, and beat down in you, whatsoever stands in opposition to the *Scepter* of *Jesus Christ*.

Sixthly and lastly; If you receive any power against your former corruptions, forget not to be *thankfull*, yea study all possible thankfulness. For that you and I are not at this present *frying in Hell flames*, never to be freed; that we have the offer of *grace* here, and *glory* hereafter, it is his unspeakable goodness. And there is nothing more *pleasing to God*, nor *profitable to us*; both for the *procuring* of the good we want, or *continuing* the good we have; than thankfulness. He will *sow* there, and there *only plenty* of his  *blessings*; where he is sure to reap plenty of *thanks* and *service*: but who will *sow* those *barren sands*, where they are sure not only to be without all hope of a good *harvest*, but are sure to loose, both their *seed* and *labour*. Consider what hath been said, and the Lord give you *understanding* in all things. And so much for the *Second Part*. An *Appendix* follows: wherein you have instances of all sorts: how *sin* besets men.

Sold only by James Crump, in Little Bartholomews Well-yard, 1660.

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